

The Vine

May 2003

For Internal Circulation Only

Vol 5/2003

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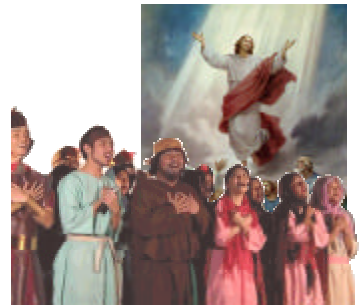


Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus. This issue we want to celebrate the unity that JCC experienced over the Easter Musical event. Indeed all barriers were down as the various ministries of all age groups worked together to perform one of JCC's finest shows. If there is one thing we can learn from this, I hope it is, "Unity is Strength!" No one can take the credit, yet all share in it. Let us therefore continue to work as one so the God's name may be glorified.

This event cost JCC \$4,500 but thank God, we received some donations amounting to \$2,500. Thus JCC need only bear \$2,000 for this activity. A very inexpensive but powerful show.

How do we keep up the euphoria? Keep on praying for those who came but did not make a decision there and then that God will continue to work in their hearts. That the seeds we have planted will indeed grow into a mighty harvest. Keep reminding them of this event by passing them this edition of The Vine which covers the event in words and pictures.

April 27th 2003 will be remembered as a milestone in JCC. This was the day that the MPH was dedicated for the Youth service which started on May 4th. It was a very sobering fact that when the youths stepped out of the pews, there was a very big gap of empty pews left behind. It is indeed a challenge for us to fill up these pews with people again. However, the battle



belongs to the Lord. We will just have to wait upon the Lord on our knees and marvel at the wonder He will do in our midst.

The Editor

Are you cool?

Temperature checks are now a way of life for JCC from 18 May 2003.

Pastor's Word



Dear Bros and Sisters/Shepherds/Church Ministry Leaders/Councilmen,



Just wish to say a word of thanks to all of you for your dedicated love and service in the recent Easter Evangelistic Musical – THE POWER OF HIS LOVE.

Many of you have put in extra efforts and much sacrifice in love for the Lord. I thank God for all of you. Indeed you all did “work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” (Colossians 3:23-24.)

CG Shepherds – Thanks for mobilising your CG members to participate actively, play various roles, support and pray, and bring along friends.

Musical Working Committee – Thanks for tremendous courage and perseverance and plain hard work.

Drama cast and technical crew – Thanks to the wonderful youth and adult actors, storytellers. You have all done a superb job.

Children ministry team – Thanks for all your hard work too to keep the children occupied so that the adults could concentrate.

Logistics team – Thanks for all the hard work and coordination also.

Choir – Thanks for the beautiful singing. All the hard practices have paid off.

continue.....





Counsellors – Thanks for your courage to counsel and assist counsellees.

Intercessors – Thanks for praying and interceding. The Lord has heard your prayers.



A section of the huge drama cast

Many thanks too to those who have worked hard in publicity, printing the invitation, pamphlets, visitor slips, etc. and those who have contributed a lot of sweat in making the elaborate costumes for the huge cast.

The people whom I have to thank are beyond listing.

Let me record here my appreciation to all beloved brothers and sisters in Christ who have played their roles away from the limelight to make the Easter Musical production a success.

We thank God that 11 people have rededicated their lives and 8 received Christ. Praise the Lord. Our leaders are taking these responses seriously and will make the necessary effort to conserve the fruits. Please pray for Bro Leong Kok Hwa, Peter Cheong, Se Ping, Michelle Lee and others who will be working with me for the follow up and nurture work.

We however cannot rest on our laurels but seek God in prayer and wisdom for the next level of faith and life as a body of Christ.

To God Be The Glory!



Revd Martin Yee



IT'S HARD TO FORGET

A reflection on the Easter Musical
(18th & 19th April)

Three days after the Easter Musical, as I write this, the music and songs still ring in my ears. The crucifixion scene still flashes across my mind. It was a powerful drama, so well played by our future leaders (the youths) that it is difficult to forget.

The attendance was overwhelming, almost bursting the sanctuary on the first night. It was similarly full-house on the second night. I was kept busy at the door so much so that I missed dinner on both days. Fortunately, God provided abundant snacks to fill up my stomach before I went home. I am happy to play my little role as an usher, something that is within my capability to do. I admired the great talents of our youths. From directing the drama, technical support to acting and singing, they all did exceedingly well. God really prepared the right people for the right job that His work can be made complete.

My wife who came on the first night was so impressed with the performance that she congratulated the youths and told her friends in the Chinese Congregation about it. She



was also very much impressed by how much the young generation has grown. I guess we still remember them as little kids. She especially remembered Benedict, whom she taught briefly in the Chinese Sunday School, as an exceptionally naughty child but is happy that he has grown up to be a sensible person, playing the lead role of Jesus. I am sure John and Peggy must be very proud of him.

It was a hugely successful event, with the young and old working as one body, putting our God-given talents together for a single purpose – for the expansion of His kingdom. God, in turn, brings in the multitudes to JCC. Many of us feel proud and excited to be part of this event. On Easter Sunday, I could still feel the euphoria in the atmosphere of the sanctuary, as though we had just won the World Cup the previous day. Spirits were uplifted and there was much rejoicing. It's not Christmas; it's EASTER. HE IS ALIVE! ALLELUIA!

Edmund Ng



I came from a Taoist family but I attended a Catholic school. In those days, it was believed that English education would bring about a better and brighter future. Thus I was sent to a Convent school. I learnt about Jesus during Bible lessons. When I was young, I was always sick. I was made to crawl under the table of the medium during the “Nine Emperor Gods” seasons annually. It did not heal me. Instead, after each visit, I got frightened and sometimes had nightmares because it was usually dim and dark under the table at the temple.

After completing my studies, I came down to Singapore to work, staying in the company’s hostel. Without my family around, I had to cook my own meals and do my own laundry. I enjoyed the freedom I had but sometimes I had this question in mind: Whom can I turn to in times of difficulties?

I was introduced to Jurong Christian Church. I remembered the God I learnt in school. Those Bible lessons taught me about God’s son, Jesus, who loves me and dies for our sins. He wants all of us to come back to Him. I always have a good impression and know the church is where I can turn to and trust. The peaceful feeling when I passed by a Christian cemetery was quite unlike the eerie feeling I would have when passing a Chinese cemetery.

In one special Christian service, my heart was ready. I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour right here in Jurong Christian Church. Since then, I know my God is more powerful than the forces of darkness. I am no longer frightened because I know my Jesus lives in me and watches over me.

As a Christian, it is not always smooth sailing. There are ups and downs. The difference is that I can turn to God and know that He is in control of all situations and knows what is best for me. On one occasion, my husband was framed by his workers. He was accused of stealing aluminum ingots from his company. He was locked up in the police station for investigation. In my helplessness, I turned to our church Pastor who had reminded me to trust God who is in control of all situations. God’s Word says the truth will set us free. I thank God for answering my prayers and revealing the truth to the investigators. My husband was finally found innocent and released.

The above is just one example of how my trust in Jesus set me free from trouble. I have been a Christian for 28 years. All these years, I have been serving God in Jurong Christian Church. I have had no regrets. God has been gracious and blessing me.



Lissa Chang





*Feedback from Cassidy's family member
&
my colleague (All pre-Christians)*

*"The musical drama is wonderful,
very touching, especially the scene of
Jesus being nailed onto the cross!
My tears dropped."*

*"The musical drama is very nice, the
lighting, the sound system, the actors/
actresses, wah! Can see that a lot of
effort was being put in."*

*"The children like the musical drama
very much, is really touching."*

Feedback from Sis. Seline



I was convinced by God's words in Roman 1:16 that I shared my testimony. At first I felt ashamed to share something so personal but His words convicted me and reminded me that through it, people with similar problems will come to trust God.



Esther Yam

*Pray that the Holy Spirit will move
in their heart and harvest the souls.*

He has been leading me especially in the armour (Costumes for the 5 soldiers) for the cast. When Susan Tan called me a day before full dress rehearsal and told me that the costumes had yet to be made, I panicked and I prayed, "God, please give me wisdom to get them done as I have limited time left." His answer was so instant. I was immediately filled with ideas as how to make the helmets and the materials were readily available at the bookstore across my house. I didn't have to travel far to source them. God is indeed very good and real.

Seline



GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR HIS BLESSINGS



Glory to God for the greatly exciting Easter Musical event at JCC with such encouraging full-house attendance on both nights – 18th & 19th April. The prayer warriors were duly rewarded by God's gracious blessing of the successful evangelical concert. SARS failed to drive people away, neither were the thunderstorms in the late afternoons. For all the actors, actresses, choir members and behind-the-scene support people, three cheers for their efforts are not enough; they deserve a standing ovation for their willing sacrifices for the Lord. If you think of the big cast and the great variety of costumes to be made, the set-up of the stage and the props to be prepared, the publicity and the rehearsal after rehearsal, and a long list of things to be done to perfect the performance for an expected eager audience, you know the amount of hard work that went into the production.

It was a great team effort among the young and old brothers and sisters in Christ who love the Lord and felt the urgency to share the Good News of Jesus Christ resurrected. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)



I cannot help admiring the vitality of the youths, their promise as leaders of tomorrow and the way in real action that they displayed their multifarious talents. Even post-event, on Easter Day when they gathered for the Easter Musical Thanksgiving to acknowledge God's gracious blessing, the youths were again a bunch of inexhaustible energy. Gracing the occasion was Revd Martin Yee (our Snr Pastor), together with Revd and Mrs John Tan (who delivered the messages and the prayers on both nights of the Easter Musical concert). There were also the adult members of JCC who could not help being infected by the vigour of the youths, so much so that albeit they were no longer physically young, they found themselves to be still young at heart in mingling with the youths for a good time. Furthermore, both the adults and youths were equally anxious to jostle for time to share their testimonies about how blessed they had felt to be a part of the wonderful Easter Musical evangelical event.



Revd & Mrs John Tan

Truly, on both nights of the Musical Production, the Power of God's Love was manifest. All present in the packed sanctuary were unanimously awed by it all. The reality was before our eyes that here in Jurong Christian Church dwells a youth force to be reckoned with, to be highly respected for their willingness to give for the Lord, to say "YES, HERE I AM" when the mobilization call was sounded for all who love the Lord to step forward and be counted faithful servants for this Easter outreach event. The struggles with personal academic or work commitments did not put them off, the dawning of the national battle against SARS did not frighten them, and the 'pains' of rehearsal after rehearsal only drove their youthful idealism to greater heights. As a testimony of this, our dear bro. Samuel Tay shared at the Thanksgiving that the drama production was initially intended to be just a small presentation, but it soon grew to the level that we finally experienced with amazement. In fact, I can state with confidence that everybody who was there to watch (including pre-Christians such as my mother and mother-in-law) had only praise for the wonderful performance of all who laboured. Worthy of note is that it was a completely in-house production with in-house talents; and our youths, though amateurs, acted with aplomb like professionals.



Samuel Tay

The power of God's love setting free the power of youth in our midst is not lost on leaders of the church. Our beloved bro. Seit Wen Wei has also shared in this issue of the Vine, ["We should move forward to the coming events and make the effort to do even better for God's sake."](#) Yeah, Yeah, well said, Wen Wei. God has blessed JCC not only with the successful Easter Musical to encourage us to strive for higher goals in outreach, he has also blessed the youths with a wonderful new air-conditioned worship hall equipped with technological convenience for them to have a worship service of their own. Our investment on the youths is a testament of the faith that the leaders of the church have in the young ones who have proven their potential to rise up to the challenge of preparing themselves to take over the service baton from the elders when the time arrives. As a Chinese saying goes, 长江后浪推前浪，世上新人换旧人。 (*Just as the rippling waves of a long river chase the preceding waves, we see in life young men continually succeeding their elders.*) JCC has never been a rich church financially, and therefore gold claddings for our building to attract people and posh luxuries to satiate visitors are definitely not what we have on offer. (By the way, it is not God's will for us to indulge in such excesses.) The fact that the Youth Worship Hall project and the Youth Worship Plan could be brought to fruition this month is evidence of God with us, that with Him all things for His purpose are possible (Matt. 19:26) and so let the skeptics keep their peace; and [it gladdens God that we have gold in the hearts of our faithful old members and our rising stars \(the young ones\).](#) These are the members who will count for sustainable church growth, because they are with the church as humble servants of God and the smell of their own sweat in the harvest field is aroma to the nose of God. They have imbibed well the lesson from the servant Jesus whom God has glorified.

(Acts 3:13) Jesus himself said to his disciples, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.” (Mk 9:35)



Our Youths and their Youth Leaders (below), who played significant roles in the successful production of the Easter Musical Drama – an evangelical outreach event.



On 27th April in the newly installed Youth Worship Hall, I watched the youths and their youth leaders being dedicated for the Lord’s service. As I thought about the tough planning that the leaders of the church had put in to realize this day, I felt sure that everyone

present to witness the occasion, young or old, shared the excitement and the joy of a new dawn for JCC, with thanks to God for His blessings.

Through the thick and thin of preparing for and perfecting the Easter Musical presentation, and through the highs and lows of working and praying as one body for a dedicated Youth Worship Service with the complement of dedicated youth cells for spiritual development, the greatest testimony of all for God’s glory must be the unspoken but obvious display of how the adults and the youths in JCC can gel together for the common object of building the church and advancing Christ’s Kingdom. Certainly, God places the adults and the youths in JCC for that single purpose. With the young and not-so-young, the old and not-so-old blending their diverse faculties for good work in the Lord’s harvest field, Jurong Christian Church can really be a happening place. [Jurong Christian Church is indeed a happening place! My Easter wish is that we will not be tempted to become wanderers with no purpose, but we will all remain united in Christ and focused on building the church to greater heights for the glory of our risen Lord.](#)



God has not failed us, so let us not fail ourselves. As we are all blessed, let us all be a blessing so that more blessings will flow our way. ‘If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.’ (1 Pet. 4:11)

John Lee



Dear all who labour for the Lord,

It was indeed a blessed time of praying, acting singing, ministering and serving together as a body. What a beautiful expression of God's people united in the same love and serving to glorify the risen Lord.

We all had a part to play in ministering to more than 300 people (I would guess, 90% of them visitors) with the message of THE POWER OF HIS LOVE. I spoke to some people after the Outreach. One, a young man, said he cried twice during the musical – being moved to tears with the touching moving presentation, singing and drama. Another said we should consider giving a performance at The Esplanade - I am not sure about that.

Thank You for being such faithful ambassadors of the message of reconciliation Christ has entrusted to us. To Him be the glory! Let's look forward to reaping and conserving the fruits God has blessed us with.

Tan Swee Leong



I WAS PONTIUS PILATE

These few days, I have been missing and thinking about our Easter Outreach event – all those time spent together with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, working

enthusiastically for the Outreach Drama production. Now, after the event, I miss the stage, the acting, the music, the lights, the props ... Jesus, Peter, Barabbas, Pilate and all those Romans soldiers, not forgetting also my wives. ☺ Don't imagine things here; I am referring to the wives of my character, Pilate. ☺ I also miss the production cast of storytellers and, basically, all of you who were involved in the Easter Outreach.

After the whole event, I have felt a stronger attachment to JCC and, most importantly, a stronger feeling for God. Come to think of it, I really enjoyed my time spent with everyone through such a long time rehearsing for the Drama. During the actual event when I was at the back stage, when those Romans soldiers knocked nails into Jesus' hands and feet, some of us were quite shaken up by the loud banging and anguished cries from Jesus (played by Benedict). It reminded us about how Jesus suffered for us and it was really touching.

We ought not take salvation for granted, as what Samuel Tay told us during the thanksgiving on Easter Sunday. Certainly, we must give thanks to God for enabling us to put up this Outreach Musical Drama whereby many people heard about the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ – not only heard, but also saw the Gospel through the moving portrayals on stage. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is FREE for us to accept into our heart. Our eternal hope rests



on the redemptive grace of God who let His Son carry the burden of our sin on the cross. I believe that most of us or all of us are encouraged by the Easter message. However, I believe that we should not dwell on that Easter Outreach event. We should move forward to the coming events and make the effort to do even better for God's sake. Let us continue our work for Him.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Seit Wen Wei



The photo shows some members of the organizing committee of The Great Family Day Outing to the Chinese Garden. They were filled with joie de vivre at a "teh-tarik" fellowship at The House of Peter on 11th May.

It is noteworthy that most of the committee were first-timers in organizing such an event, including a number of them who were not in the photo because they were busy with other commitments.

*It only takes a spark
To get a fire going;
And soon all those around
Can warm up in its glowing.
That's how it is with God's love
Once you experience it;
You spread His love to everyone
You want to pass it on!*

Let's rejoice. Let's pass on the love of God. Let the fizz that is bubbling forth within the Family of Christ here in JCC continue to pour. Let the effervescence gush in praise of God for making all things possible!

John Lee



JCC FAMILY DAY @ CHINESE GARDEN

May 1, 2003

153 persons, including 4 senior citizens, relatives of Pastor Anthony, Tony Koh, Jim Lee and Dorothy Ow, joined the JCC Family Day. There were 8 additional guests including a couple from our Chinese Congregation. Praise the Lord!



We enjoyed the favour of our Lord as He smiled on us with good weather and even a covering for our heads. The organizing committee had everything else under control – games, food and fun. If you were there, then I need not tell you what transpired; but if you were not there, I hope these pictures will give you an idea of the blessings we had.

There were four team-building games conducted by a qualified trainer, June. At the end of the games, we had to answer some questions on



what lessons we learnt from the activities. Then we washed up and had our lunch. The program was so tight that we actually missed going round the Chinese Gardens. Thus, at the end of our time together, those who still had the energy took a stroll round the gardens.



Believing in JESUS CHRIST is so good! (“Siong Shin Yah Saw Chin Chia Ho”- Hokkien)

By Tony Koh

In this trying time, SARS dominates every News Update and attests to the fragility of life. Still, life must go on. Ultimately, our Creator is in full control. We did not allow ourselves to be paralyzed by fear. That was why we thoroughly enjoyed our gathering as a big family of GOD during this JCC Family Day outing at the Chinese Garden. “Believing in Jesus Christ is so Good!” – We sang in English, Hokkien and Cantonese.

From the gathering, we learnt a number of important lessons:

- **Unity in Adversity and Diversity**
 We took our temperatures and made our “SARS FREE” declaration – a practice that has become part of our life in Singapore now. Participants were divided into various colour groups. Despite the adversity of a borderless SARS threat, the strong turnout with participants of all age groups and personalities was a great testimony of the unity in Christ we enjoyed in adversity and diversity.
- **Getting to know Each other by our NAME**
 The Blanket Game reminded us that since God knows us individually by name, we too must learn to know one another by name as one big family in Christ.
- **Moving in one direction and in tandem**

Whether old or young, we learnt to move in one direction following the leader and with creativity and innovation. That was what the Balloon and Group game was all about.

- **Each of us is part of the Puzzle and of the Church**

Whether we are a big or small puzzle, we are still the Church. When the pieces are connected and interlocked, we see the Big Picture of a wonderful body in Christ Jesus.

- **The Minefield Game**

Amidst all the noises, we can still hear the voice of God if we care to stick out our ears.

Surely, the Family Day was a great way to testify that GOD IS GOOD to us as a family in Christ, and to keep our spirits high. *Three cheers to the organizing committee.*



Some of the organizing committee having a well deserved break.

A Note of Thanks from Peter Cheong:

I believe we ought to thank the following people:

Sis Peggy Lee for her help and sponsorship of balloons, Bro Nick for being our camera man (often lonely, no chance to enjoy the fun), Bro John Lee as our roving reporter/cameraman, Bro Jason Tan for being our guitarist and Alicia, Jonathan and Pei'en for leading the singspiration.



Also some sisters for bringing those lovely masterpieces (cakes/delicacies) to share with all of us. Of course not forgetting all the labour of love and sponsorship from the Organising Committee.



A very special thank you to all who had participated in the May Day Family Outing, for selflessly setting aside other commitments and activities to spend their personal time with God's big family so as to be a blessing to one another. Their love and concern for the Body of Christ is indeed very much appreciated. Certainly, our heavenly Father would be most pleased to have His children faithfully obeying and living out a life of Love, expressed through Christ Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.



Finally, we want thank God, our Heavenly Father again for His faithfulness and goodness in blessing this family outing with a great turnout, a very fine and sunny weather, a beautiful scenic environment and free use of tentage area and carpark. Truly, it was a day that the Lord has made.



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盲人福音事工
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29 April 2003

Dear Praying Friends,

Greetings to you.

In spite of the hindrances and stress caused by the SARS problem, we thank the Lord for something that we can rejoice in. On 1st April, one of our new contacts prayed to received salvation. Please pray for Alice's spiritual growth, and that the Lord will restore good health to her. She lost her sight due to diabetes, and is now receiving dialysis treatment.

We are experiencing a shortage of manpower due to the SARS problem. We are thankful that none of us came down with the disease. But many volunteers are unable to provide transport service. And due to the lack of transportation, we were unable to run the usual fellowship meeting for the blind. We are hard pressed! On one hand, the blind people are eager to come for fellowship meeting (Heb. 10:24-25) and on the other hand, there are advices that it is not wise to hold gatherings. Please pray that the Lord will help us, and also provide the means to do what is right during this time.

The renovation of our premises will commence on 2nd May, and it would take about two weeks to be completed. This project will cost about forty thousand dollars. Please pray that the workers will do the work well and speedily.

Prayer:

Almighty God, enable us to really dwell under the shelter of your protection. LORD, you are our refuge and our fortress, our God, in whom we trust. save us from the deadly pestilence of SARS. Help us not to live in terror and fear of this plague and economic downturn. O Lord, teach us to make You our dwelling and our refuge and let no harm befall us, nor let disaster to come near our home and country. When we call upon you, please answer us, and be with us in trouble, and deliver us and honour us. With long life satisfy us and show us your salvation. Amen.

Yours in our Father's service,

Cheong Cheng Choo

祈求聖靈開啓心靈的眼睛，承受耶穌基督的恩典

Pray that the Holy Spirit will open their spiritual eyes to behold Jesus as Lord.

What Does Trusting God Really Mean?

By Dr John Ng

(The following is an extract. You are recommended to read the full article published in the Apr-May issue of VANTAGEPOINT, also available at <http://www.eagles.com.sg/vantagepoint.html>)

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Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight." How do I know I am trusting God and not depending on my own wisdom?

Trusting God means giving God our total devotion. I have a good Christian friend, David, who once worked for a world renowned MNC in China. When he was headhunted for the job, he was completely blown over because it was one of the largest and most reliable companies in the world. He became totally dedicated to the job, pouring all his energy to the work, and neglecting church and family commitments.

Just a year later, through a sudden twist of events, the company had to lay him off. He was utterly devastated. The most dependable MNC had let him down. He shared with me, "I trusted the company. I never imagined that such a great company would lay people off." He was angry and bitter. He felt God had let him down. It was only through a slow process of soul searching and releasing to God that he came to terms with the situation. He found another job only after a year and a half later. He said, "Through it all, I discovered my true object of trust and it revealed my real priority in life."

Like David, we may claim we trust God but in fact, something else is our true object of trust. God has to take away these crutches to reveal our misplaced trust.

Trusting God means reverential obedience to do His will. When we are pushed to a corner, we are tempted to resort to unethical means, illegitimate methods, immoral ways, and dishonest schemes to get out. Instead, we should fear God and shun evil.

I have a Christian businessman friend who lost millions of dollars during the Asian currency crisis. When his stocks and property prices came tumbling down, he was scrambling, conniving and scheming to get out. But the harder he tried, the worse it became. The more he tried to manipulate and control, the more he was losing control. Finally, he gave up and released his pain to God.

He shared, "The peace finally came when I stopped conniving and acknowledged my own greed. I was mentally prepared to face the consequences. The toughest decision was to let go and let God. I decided to fear God and shun evil.

Trusting God means being generous with our wealth. "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops." (Proverbs 3:9) Honoring God is to give Him the due respect and recognition. Often when I challenge people to tithe, I often ask, "Is the 10% before or after CPF?" We become rather calculative in our giving. That's not giving God the due respect. He is after all our Creator and Redeemer who owns everything.

Some of us still believe that as long as we give 10% to God, the other 90% belongs to us. In fact, all the 100% belongs to Him. If we really trust God, we will be generous because we believe that He will provide for us.

Reflection on Psalm 1

The Psalms

The Psalms is a collection of poems expressing praise, worship and confession to God. Poetry is the interpretive presentation of human experiences in an artistic manner through use of images, symbols, figures of speech and emotive expressions.

Psalm 1

Psalm 1 is meditative and reflective, presenting the life of the godly person in contrast with the wicked person. The Psalm opens with a description of what a godly person does not do. He does not “walk in the counsel of the wicked,” metaphorically stating that the godly person does not live based on the advice of the wicked which is to live life independently of God. The godly person does not “stand in the ways of sinners”. This speaks metaphorically of not participating in activities of sinners – that which is contrary to God’s moral will. The godly person does not “sit in the seat of scoffers”. This again is figurative, to sit gives a sense of being one with the scoffers – those who have no fear of God and assume that there are no consequences to sin.

Verse 2 continues with what the godly person does. He delights in God’s word

– he has learned to enjoy it. He meditates on the law of the Lord day and night. This speaks of the devotion of the godly person to God’s word. He continually spends time, reading, studying and thinking about God’s word and its relevance and application to his life.

Psalm 1

¹ Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Verse 3 paints a word picture of the godly person as a tree planted by streams of water. The Psalmist points out the qualities of the godly person as embodied in the image of the tree – he is productive – “yields fruit in season.” He stays close to the source of life – “planted by streams of water,” he is vitally connected to the source which sustains him and in so doing, he does not wither. As a

consequence, “whatever he does prospers.” This does not refer to worldly prosperity but of prospering in God’s sight, accomplishing God’s will, fulfilling His calling and

receiving God’s approval in what he does.

Verse 4 speaks of the wicked man. All the things mentioned in verses 1 –3, does not apply to the wicked. He is neither blessed nor prospering. The Psalmist describes him figuratively as “chaff that the wind blows away”. Chaff is the

waste product of grains after threshing and winnowing. Chaff is contrasted to the “tree planted by streams of water” giving an impactful image of the wicked’s vulnerability due to the lack of a true foundation and his worthlessness.

The final two verses conclude the Psalm looking to the future verdict of the two ways of life depicted. The wicked cannot stand up to God’s judgement and will ultimately perish. The Lord knows the whole manner of our life and promises to watch over the godly.

Message of the Psalm 1 for today

The Psalm presents to us with a choice of two ways of life – the godly and the wicked. The path we choose determines where we will spend eternity. Though the Psalmist does not state his ideas in prepositional form, the contrast of the two ways of life conveys the idea that the option is available. There is a progressive identification in the way of the wicked that the godly man must avoid – from walking to standing to sitting. To walk suggests being in agreement to, i.e. to go along; to stand suggest participation and to sit implies active involvement. Christians have to guard ourselves against the lure of wickedness and not to allow it any foothold. The wicked may even experience temporal prosperity but we must not be blinded by such momentary advantages. Those who are wicked will have to face God’s discipline in this life and eventual judgement before God. Prosperity in God’s sight does not mean immunity from failure of difficulties. As we go through experiences that may not seem “blessed” we need to see that the Lord has lessons of us, and He see the need for us to learn such lessons.

When we apply God’s word and wisdom to life’s encounters and decisions, the fruit we bear will be good and will receive God’s approval. Just as he tree soaks up water and bears fruits we are also to apply God’s word in producing actions and attitudes that honours God.

The Psalmist’s injunction to meditate on God’s word is apt in this age of the pervasiveness and perverseness of evil. The more we meditate and know God’s word, the better are we equipped with the resources to prioritise our actions and attitudes that honours God and for His word to guide our daily living and decisions. When we delight in God’s word and His presence, we draw near to the source of life and godliness that empowers our influence in this world so dominated by the wicked. †

By Tan Swee Leong

A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, she said, "Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face."

"Yes," the class said. "Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position the blood doesn't run into my feet?"

A little fellow shouted, "Cause your feet ain't empty."

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds.

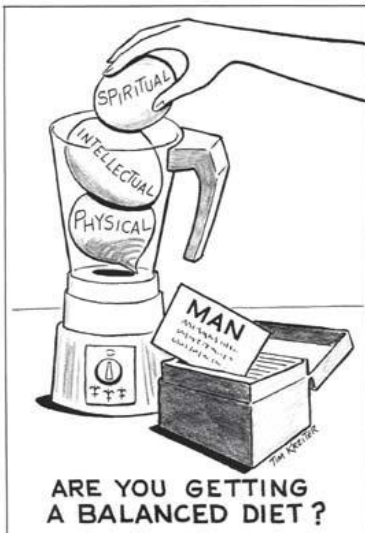
After explaining the commandment to "honor" thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, "Thou shall not kill."

Are you missing out something this year?



Will you be there from 27th to 28th June?



Losing Your Enthusiasm?

Psalm 118:24 "This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."